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For Immediate Release  
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## **Savings from Governor Walker's Budget Reforms Top \$1 BILLION in Savings for Taxpayers**

*Local leaders tell Governor Walker how the reforms are working*

**Madison**—Governor Walker joined local officials in Manitowoc today to announce the documented savings for taxpayers from Act 10 reforms have now exceeded \$1 billion, less than one year after the law went into effect.

"This is a great day for the hardworking people of this state who pay for the expenses of government," Governor Walker said, addressing the group gathered at the Manitowoc County Highway Department. "I want to commend the local leaders of school districts, villages, cities, and counties who rolled up their sleeves and put our reforms to work for them. They are finding innovative ways to be more efficient, while still maintaining and improving services. This is just the beginning. We are turning things around, and this is a fantastic start."

Manitowoc County Executive Bob Ziegelbauer, Fond du Lac School Board President Eric Everson, and Plymouth Mayor Don Pohlman joined the Governor to talk about the benefits of the reforms.

### **MANITOWOC COUNTY**

Savings to taxpayers in Manitowoc County total **\$2,714,987**, including \$1,018,421 from employee pension contributions, \$1,080,352 from health insurance plan changes, \$500,000 from changes to overtime rules, \$116,214 from salary restructuring and phasing out "longevity" pay.

"In 2010, prior to Act 10, Manitowoc County was cutting back on services and laying off employees in the face of unsustainable growth in personnel costs," said State Representative and Manitowoc County Executive Bob Ziegelbauer (I-Manitowoc). "Since Act 10, the savings allow Manitowoc County to re-staff and reinforce, saving jobs; hold the line on property taxes while continuing to deliver high quality services; and provide stable employment opportunities for employees into the future."

### **FOND DU LAC SCHOOLS**

Taxpayers in the Fond du Lac District are saving more than \$4,000,000 due to Act 10 reforms, including more than \$2 million for employee pension contributions. The Fond du Lac School Board also changed work rules, requiring teachers to work an eight hour day, instead of seven.

Fond du Lac School Board President Eric Everson says they now have the ability to make decisions based on what they believe is best for students and education.

“We’ve added time to the school day,” Everson said. “Teachers have time to collaborate. We did not layoff any staff. We did not cut programs. The Governor’s reforms allow us to make the decisions we need to make to have great schools that taxpayers can afford. Change is hard. It’s not always easy doing what you think is right, but we will have a stronger school district because of this.”

#### CITY OF PLYMOUTH

According to the Mayor, for the first time in six years they balanced the budget without borrowing and with a zero tax levy increase.

“Before the reforms, we would raise the levy limit to the max, and we still didn’t have enough revenue to cover the increases in salary, health care and pension costs. As a result, we had to take money from reserves,” Said Mayor Don Pohlman. “Now we can manage our expenses, and this year we actually put \$150,000 back into reserves as opposed to taking \$150,000 out. If not for the changes Governor Walker made in Madison, we would not be able to maintain our services and our staffing.”

The \$1 billion in documented savings was compiled from hundreds of media reports, local budgets, and surveys of local government officials throughout the state. These results show that the total savings exceeded reductions in state aid. The billion dollars saved through the reforms are one of the reasons that property taxes for the median value Wisconsin property taxpayer went down for the first time in over a decade.

Since 1998, property taxes paid by homeowners have risen 43 percent. This year property taxes paid by the typical homeowner went down .4 percent. Without reforms the average homeowner would have paid an additional \$700 over the biennium.

Interesting findings from an analysis of the savings include:

- The Department of Corrections has reduced overtime costs by over \$2 million in just three months compared to the previous year.
- School districts that reported competitively bidding out their health insurance plan saved \$220 saved per pupil per year on average.
- Local units of government are making government more efficient by sharing services and ending expensive practices such as overtime abuses.
- These savings do not include health insurance savings from CESA’s, special districts, 68% of school districts, and many local governments in Wisconsin.

The following website contains a detailed analysis of exactly where the \$1 billion of savings came from: [www.reforms.wi.gov](http://www.reforms.wi.gov).

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